



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Attorney Docket No: 37697-0033

Applicant(s): Edward W. MERRILL *et al.* Confirmation No.: 8881  
Serial No.: 09/764,445 Examiner: To be assigned  
Filing Date: January 19, 2001 Group Art Unit: 3738  
Title: RADIATION AND MELT TREATED ULTRA HIGH MOLECULAR  
WEIGHT POLYETHYLENE PROSTHETIC DEVICES

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

RECEIVED  
JAN 07 2003  
TC 1700

Sir:

Prior to examination, please enter the following amendments. Please debit any underpayments, or credit any overpayments, to firm deposit account no. 08-1641.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please add the following claim.

**143.** (New) A process for preparing a medical implant having improved mechanical properties, wherein the method comprises:

irradiating a polyethylene article to form free radicals; and

heating the polyethylene article to a temperature at or above the melting point such that the free radicals can recombine.

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